

surely there are country houses, the date of which is undeniable, that present a style of their own, far inferior in beauty to that of the Tudor mansions, yet characterized by an amplitude and a stately formality which seem to correspond well with full-bottomed wigs and My Lord's grand manner.

Of vital religion, Mr. Ashton is probably right in saying that there was not much : that had taken its departure with the Puritan. Freethinking was pretty rife, though often covered by a politic mask, as in the case of Bolingbroke, who, to gain the votes of the High Church party, framed persecuting laws against Dissenters, and left infidel treatises to be printed after his death. There was, however, a good deal of outward observance, such as daily prayer in churches and wearing black in Lent ; perhaps there was even rather more of real awe and reverence than is commonly supposed. Marlborough, before a battle, always had prayers read at the head of each regiment, and himself received the sacrament from his chaplain. Of political religion, such as the Sacheverell affair called forth, there was an amount fully proportioned to the lack of Christianity. It seems wonderful that the red hot supporters of the Church of England should have treated her clergy with contumely ; that they should have behaved to the chaplain as to a menial servant, made him leave the table before the dessert, and forced him, as the condition of being presented to a small living, to marry My Lady's waiting maid. But the solution is to be found in Swift's "Sermon on Brotherly Love," which, after a paragraph or two on a feeling of which the preacher himself had but a limited experience, proceeds to ask whose fault it is that Brotherly Love does not more prevail. The ready answer is, that it is the fault of the Papists and Nonconformists, upon whom

the preacher then heartily comes down. The Church of England was prized as the bulwark against these two foes—Popery, which, in the time of Louis XIV., the nation might still reasonably regard with terror, and Puritanism, of whose reign the gentry still retained the bitterest recollection. Besides, the subjection of the Anglican Establishment endeared, and still endears, it to the squire. "As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side ; and every now and then inquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church ; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent." What Sir Roger would not fight, or at least vote and drink, for a branch of the universal Church so "pure and reformed" as this ? Nor were the clergy always personally objects of reverence. Swift writes to Stella : "I walked here after nine, two miles, and I found a parson drunk fighting with a seaman, and Patrick and I were so wise as to part them, but the seaman followed him to Chelsea, cursing at him, and the parson slipped into a house, and I know no more. It mortified me to see a man in my coat so overtaken." Perhaps it might have equally mortified the "man in my coat" to see certain portions of the Dean's writings.

Saving in exceptional times, such as that of Scroggs and Jeffreys, the English courts of law seem to have been always dignified and, after their fashion, just. After their fashion, it was ; for the law was unscientific, irrational, and barbarous in the highest degree. All that could be said for it was that it did aim, in its narrow way, at upholding personal rights and liberties against arbitrary power. Even